

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

April 2, 2019

Proclaiming April 2019 as “Fair Housing Month” in the County of Los Angeles

Each year during the month of April, the United States celebrates the rights granted under Civil Rights Act of 1968, Title VIII (Act), which guarantees the right to equal housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, gender, families with children, persons with disabilities, and national origin. It also includes requirements that reasonable accommodations be made for persons with disabilities.

The County of Los Angeles (County), through the Community Development Commission (CDC) and the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA), supports and promotes fair housing activities. During this past year, the Board of Supervisors (Board) has taken several steps to affirmatively further fair housing across the Los Angeles Urban County, including directing the CDC and HACoLA to develop a robust plan to affirmatively further fair housing that goes beyond what is required by federal law to create inclusive and integrated communities throughout the County.

In an effort to combat decades of discriminatory practices and create truly integrated communities throughout the County, the Board directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to allocate \$5,000,000 to and/or from the Affordable Housing Budget Unit in Fiscal Year 2018-19 to specifically support the CDC and HACoLA’s recommended actions that were included in their proposed plan.

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These actions include:

1. Developing source-of-income discrimination protections that expand the prohibition of discrimination to rental subsidies, including but not limited to, Section 8 vouchers;
2. Creating a partnership between HACoLA and landlords to incentivize program participation;
3. Expanding current homeownership programs for residents with limited means, and stabilization subsidy programs that can offer short-term and long-term rental assistance to at-risk or displaced families;
4. Engaging in an in-depth gentrification study that will provide a broader interpretation of displacement and neighborhood changes and develop the capacity to identify areas at risk of such occurrences;
5. Committing funding for the creation of an acquisition fund to acquire properties in gentrifying neighborhoods to alleviate the displacement of residents with limited means;
6. Enhancing funding for fair housing investigations and enforcement; and
7. Supporting the related Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Report and Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness that examined factors contributing to the overrepresentation of Black people among the population experiencing homelessness, identified opportunities to increase racial equity within the homeless service delivery system, and developed recommendations to more effectively meet the needs of Black people experiencing homelessness.

Ongoing activities designed to promote fair housing to the residents of the unincorporated areas of the County and all Participating Cities in the County's Community Development Block Grant Program include conducting a program of informational, educational, counseling, and investigative services. These fair housing services provided in the County address a wide variety of landlord-tenant issues:

evictions, illegal entries, harassment, refusals to rent, pets, lockouts, substandard conditions, and repairs. These issues are resolved through mediation, referrals to other agencies, and litigation.

In the past fiscal year alone, fair housing services provided assistance to approximately 2,548 individuals, conducted 159 media events to increase public awareness, and held 103 trainings, workshops, community meetings, walk-in clinics, and other events.

On April 18, 2019, the 20th Annual Housing Rights Summit (Summit) will commemorate National Fair Housing Month and the ideals embodied by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and fellow civil-rights leaders. The Summit is a forum of dialogue, education, and action, designed to address civil rights and social justice issues affecting communities throughout Southern California and will feature educational panels, expert speakers and a community resource fair that will bring together nonprofit agencies, legal aid groups and government officials.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Commemorate and proclaim April 2019, as Fair Housing Month in the County of Los Angeles in order to recognize the value and importance of the rights guaranteed under Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and its amendments, and commit to the furtherance of the Act's goals and ideals throughout the year.

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